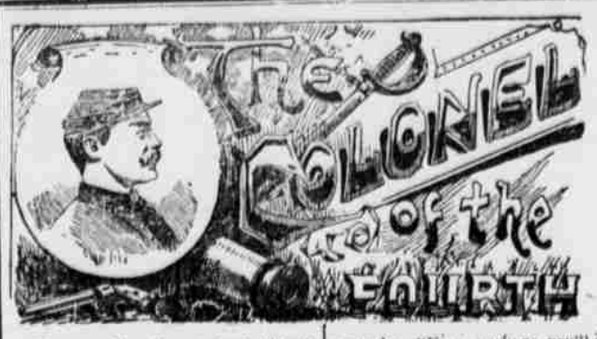


"No, pray, Mrs. Besant, don't disturb her. I really must be going—Flossie will be thinking I have fainted by the wayside," and the young man hurried away, eager to escape the spinster from Chicago, who was "not at all good looking and rather passe."

Imagine his chagrin then, when, as he turned to fasten the garden-gate, he saw Mrs. Besant, who had followed him out on the veranda, standing with her arm embracing the waist of the prettiest girl Mark Henderson had ever seen in his life—such a vision of youthful loveliness that he stood for the moment transfixed—and to think that, if he had only known, he might have escorted these two pretty women to his sister's house. Well, he'd pay Flossie out for the joke she had played him, anyhow, and make up for lost time in the evening.

On his return to his sister's, he found that the parsonage people had already arrived and that Dr. Burrows had brought an addition to the party in the shape of a young Methodist minister, a recent arrival in the place.

"I wanted to be civil to the fellow," Harry whispered in Mark's ear, "but I'm afraid you'll find him an awful bore."

Rev. Lubin Ferry came up at that moment for an introduction to the hero of the evening. He was a gentle, overgrown young man, who wore glasses and dropped perpetually sanctimonious phrases from his lips; little scraps of devotional expressions that were never intended to pass as colloquial currency in common conversation—as different a man from the big-hearted, broad-principled, scholarly Josiah Brentwood as it was possible to conceive. Moreover, he was the only son of a widow, who had tied him to her apron-string from the time he was a little lad, following him to college, and never letting him out of her sight for more than a few hours in his whole life, and the young man had become so imbued with this maternal solicitude that he dragged his mother's sentiments into every thought he uttered, to Mark Henderson's intense disgust, especially when he learned afterwards that the mamma was a selfish, vulgar old body, who took every cent of her son's earnings and made him wait on her hand and foot.

"I'm so glad to meet you, Captain Henderson," the young minister gushed, taking Mark's brawny hand in both his chubby white ones and nursing it affectionately. "The repose of this quiet spot must be very soothing after the turmoil of battle—wounded, too, they tell me you've been. Well, as ma says, we've much to be thankful for in this vale of tears."

"Yet I don't feel particularly grateful for a bullet in my shoulder-blade," Mark said, abruptly, disengaging his hand from the minister's grasp.

"Ah, no. Bless me, no. I didn't mean that at all; but do let me introduce you to my sweet young friend Grace Brentwood," and with an air of proprietorship he took the soldier across the room and made him known to Miss Brentwood, with as much sangfroid as though he had been familiar with that young person from girlhood. A few hours later Mark heard him talking of Mrs. Besant's niece as "my dear young friend Kate Lester," and wondered what there was in the clerical profession that permitted such breaches of social etiquette, or, as he called it, I am sorry to say, "unlimited gall."

Grace and the Captain became fast friends, and when he told her delicious little anecdotes of Frank's bravery and general heroism, you may be sure he

HE WAS A GENTLE, OVERGROWN YOUNG MAN.

did not lose favor in her eyes, which literally shone with gratification. Then he had the delightful privilege of leading Kate Lester in to supper and sitting beside her. Beautiful! Well, he knew not which to admire most, the prettiness of her face or the piquancy of her manner.

Miss Ruth sat on the other side of him at the table, and took perhaps a little more than her share of the soldier's attention—at least so thought Miss Lester, if one could judge from her looks.

The conversation was general and of course about the war, for in those stirring days no two or three could gather together without drifting into the thrilling channels of that prolific subject. This person and that known to the party personally or by hearsay were mentioned and their actions discussed, Frank Besant, of course, coming in for more than his share of the general interest, when Miss Ruth propounded a question which seemed to cause a little flutter among the parsonage party.

"Did you, when you were with Frank Besant, hear any thing of a young man named James Lawson?" she asked her military neighbor. There was a lull in the conversation, so the question was painfully distinct.

Before he could reply Mr. Lubin Ferry stretched his long neck forward, and speaking across the table began:

"Ma says she has heard that James Lawson is—"

"I was not asking what your ma said, brother Ferry," Miss Ruth answered severely. "Now, perhaps, you'll allow Captain Henderson to answer my question."

"Really, marm," Mark replied, with a smile at the lady's petulance, "I don't think I have the pleasure of the gentleman's acquaintance. Is he one of Lieutenant Besant's brother officers?"

"I suppose he is—he enlisted at the same time and in the same regiment. I have only heard once from him since he left"—how defiantly she looked at her brother—"and then he said he was a full-private, which I suppose is a step on the ladder of rank."

"You surely don't mean a tall, ungainly fellow with light hair and eyes that look two ways at once—ah, yes, I think Besant did say he came from the same place he did—well, if that is the man you allude to, Miss Brentwood, I did see him the very night before I left the camp. He was a full private still, Miss Ruth—so full, that a corporals' guard was hustling him off to the caboose."

A general laugh greeted this unhappy reminiscence, and from that moment Captain Henderson sank many degrees below zero in Miss Brentwood's estimation.

Notwithstanding this little contretemp, they spent a most delightful evening, to which Mark Henderson's mind often wandered in the lone hours by the camp-fire, with Kate Lester's sweet face as the crowning center-piece of the whole delightful reflection.

After supper he enjoyed a charming talk with the two young ladies, which was only interrupted at nine o'clock, when Rev. Lubin came to bid them good-night, as ma didn't approve of his keeping late hours.

When he was gone Harry Burrows brought forth some excellent cigars and Mr. Brentwood and the younger men by the gracious consent of the ladies were soon in the full enjoyment of the fragrant weed.

"I don't suppose brother Ferry smokes," Harry Burrows explained.

"I'm sure he doesn't," Miss Ruth snapped. "His ma wouldn't let him."

By and by they drifted into more serious conversation, and Mrs. Besant explained a plan she had matured of establishing a woman's working club for the preparation of necessaries and comforts for the soldiers, appealing to Mark Henderson for suggestions, which she accepted with an air of deference that was very gratifying to the young man, who had a flattering opinion of his own judgment, and liked, as we all do, to be considered an authority.

Then all too soon they went home, and Flossie forthwith began to catechise her brother, who seemed in no wise reluctant to gratify her curiosity.

"Well, Mark, what do you think of my pretty widow?"

"She is charming."

"And Grace Brentwood?"

"Pretty as a peach. But Miss Lester is the sweetest, loveliest girl I ever met in all my life."

"Oh!"

It was all his sister said, but the little monosyllable expressed a volume.

CHAPTER VIII.
FORT DONELSON.

Meanwhile how fared it with Frank Besant and the gallant boys of the Fighting Fourth? You may be assured that they were indulging in no quiet little tea-parties and mild flirtations—to them rather the stern realities of the tented field, the dangers, privations and miseries of those whose trade is war.

But before I resume the thread of my story I must trespass on my reader's patience, while we take a passing glance at the chess-board on which this stupendous game of human slaughter was being played.

Halleck had succeeded Fremont as Commander-in-Chief of the Department of the Missouri, with headquarters at St. Louis.

This department was divided into several districts, of which we have principally to do with those of "Cairo," under command of General Grant, and "Ohio," under Buell.

Now the Confederates held that Kentucky naturally belonged to them, and the dawn of 1862 saw them with a line of fortifications dotted across that State and held by strong detachments—prominently Columbus on the Mississippi, Fort Henry on the Tennessee, Fort Donelson (twelve miles distant by land) on the Cumberland, Bowling Green, Mill Spring and Cumberland Gap. The critical points in this long line of ramparts were Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, the center, and the keys to Southern Kentucky and Tennessee. If these were taken the whole was untenable.

Now, while our hero was on the march to join General Buell's command, preparations were made for this momentous enterprise, and its execution was intrusted to General Grant, who on the 30th of January moved from Cairo with a force of seventeen thousand men, assured of the co-operation of Commodore Foote, in command of a flotilla of gun-boats.

The idea was for the fleet to reduce the fort, while Grant cut off the retreat by land, but Confederate General Tilghman, seeing from the first that resistance was useless, sent his garrison of three thousand men to Fort Donelson, and nominally held Fort Henry with a handful of brave defenders, who, of course, after a feeble resistance, surrendered.

Grant and Foote then turned their attentions to Fort Donelson.

And all this time the boys of the Fourth were leisurely making their way to Buell, impeded however by small engagements with the enemy and constantly exposed to irritating attacks of guerrillas.

On the night of the 6th of February the regiment was in camp—at least the boys were bivouacking around such scanty fires as the rain-drenched character of the brushwood and rotten logs they had gathered permitted. By this time, you must know, they had gone through so much suffering and seen blood so often shed, that their cheeks no longer blanched at thought of death, nor their sense revolted at sight of gaping wound, or ghastly corse. They were "old soldiers" now—veterans in all but years.

On the windward side of one smoldering heap of smoking brush a little group of officers was gathered. The surroundings were miserable enough, but not all the wretchedness of scene and season could repress the reckless dispositions of those gallant lads, who were "yarning" with as much exhilaration as though they had not a gloomy, starless sky for a roof and a waste of sodden sand for a carpet.

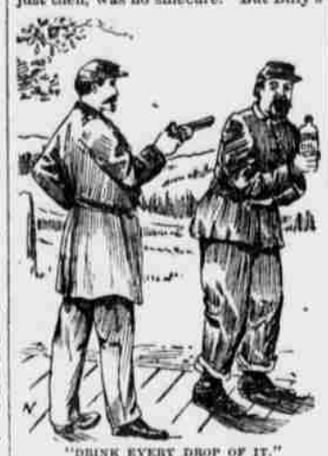
"Say, boys," said one with a laugh, pointing to a tall, cloaked figure, receding among the trees, "there goes Billy Sawbones with his tools under his arm—some poor fellow's in for a knifing."

Yet no more humane man ever practiced the healing art that William Saunders, who was loved by the boys none the less sincerely because they joked about him—had Galen himself cast his lot with them, he would have had to run the gauntlet of their boisterous wit: for from Colonel to drummer-boy not one was there whose name was not perverted to some rough soubriquet.

"Ah, Billy's a broth of a boy," said another, knocking the ashes out of his pipe. "Did you ever hear how he served the Irish navy, when we were in camp at Sedalia?"

"No, what did he do?" came in a chorus.

"Why, there were a score of laborers engaged in making a road to the camp, big, rough fellows, not long out from the old country. Billy had the job of doctoring them, which, what with bruises from drunken rows and a smart touch of ague, that haunted the place just then, was no sinecure. But Billy's



"DRINK EVERY DROP OF IT."

greatest trouble was the constant demand they made on him for castor-oil, which they used to such an extent that he began to think it was their National beverage. The truth leaked out at last: the fellows greased their shoes with it. Many a man would have got in a passion on making such a discovery, but not so Billy. He just bided his time; and when one day, a big, hulking fellow brought a four-ounce phial to be filled, Billy was as mild as mother's milk with him. 'You say you have pains in the back, my man, which a few doses of this oil relieves?' he asked the interesting patient. 'Howly Mother!' was the reply; 'but it's bended double I am wid 'em.' Bill poured the rich, creamy, golden fluid into the man's bottle, and he was just making off with his prize, when up flew the doctor's hand clutching the butt of a revolver as big as a small cannon, its glittering barrel pointed straight at the victim's head: 'Not another step,' the doctor roared. 'Drink every drop of it on the spot, or I'll blow the roof of your head off!' So Billy had no more calls for castor-oil."

A roar of laughter rewarded the narrator, which was checked by the hasty advent of an orderly, who said:

"Is Lieutenant Besant here, gentlemen?"

"Here I am," cried Frank, stepping forward. "What is it?"

"Major Hopkins says, will you take a file of men and a cot to the picket by the creek bridge to fetch in a wounded officer? Quick as you can, sir, if you please."

"I told you so, boys," muttered the man who had called attention to the doctor, while Frank hurriedly got ready for the sad duty.

On nearing the little bridge, which spanned the muddy creek, he found Dr. Saunders kneeling over a prostrate figure, while a soldier held a lantern for him, and the sentry stood resting on his musket and gazing at the painful scene. Beside them was a horse, whose hanging head and heaving flanks told of hard usage.

"Who is it, doctor?" Frank asked, anxiously.

"A cavalry man—a mere lad—cut all to pieces—but we must get him into field hospital as quickly as possible. See, here's a dispatch I took from him. I'd hard work to get it, poor boy, he clutched it so tightly. I guess you'd better hurry off with it to the Colonel and leave your men to help me in with him," a piece of advice which Frank promptly acted on.

As Colonel Fulton tore open the blood-stained missive his eyes flashed and the color mounted to his cheek. "By heaven," he said, "this is glorious news. We are ordered to reinforce Grant at Fort Donelson. Order taps to be beaten and all lights out in the camp; for the boys must have some sleep before they take the road again."

On the evening of the 12th of February the Fighting Fourth, wearied with a long day's march over swamps and brushwood, joined the Union forces, now increased to thirty thousand men.

The fort itself, occupying about one hundred acres, stood on a bluff a hundred feet high, with sixty-five guns threatening approach by the river, but almost unprotected from the land side, save for the inaccessible ruggedness of the ground and the heavy trees which had been felled, and which proved to be formidable abatis. Already Grant had made an unsuccessful attack upon a battery commanding a road upon which he was trying to move.

But who among the thousands who lay down to rest that night before the doomed fort will ever forget its misery?

As the men lay on the bare ground without tents, without fires, many without even blankets, a cruel storm of sleet and snow swept over them and the thermometer fell to 12 degrees above zero, while some of the poor wounded heroes literally froze to death on their icy resting-places.

Next day the battle was resumed with alternate success and failure.

In the afternoon the deafening cannonade of the fort guns told them that Foote's gun-boats were already in advance.

At four o'clock Frank found himself in command of his company, for his Captain was wounded and had been carried to the rear. Twice they had charged, and once again he was rallying them, when a sharp voice cried in tone of command:

"Halt, sir! Give your men breathing time. Do you not see that your line is not half formed?"

Turning with impatience at the rebuke, he saw a man with a rather slight, ungainly figure with slouch hat and undress uniform. He knew not then that he was gazing at that son of destiny, Ulysses Grant.

But ere the angry reply rose to the lad's lips an aid-de-camp rode up and saluted Frank's impertinent critic.

"What news from the river, Winters?"

"The worst, General. Six gunboats have advanced—two are disabled and are drifting helplessly down the stream, while the others seem likely to follow."

"Ah! then, after all, the blow must be struck on land!"

And General Grant passed on, a strange, cold gleam of determination lighting his usually impassive features.

Meanwhile it was faring but badly with the hapless garrison. On the night of the 14th a council of war was held by the beleaguered commanders. They had done all that mortal men could do, and knew that the end was come. General Floyd turned over the command to General Pillow, taking, however, his brigade across the river, and Pillow turned it over again to Buckner, succeeding, too, himself, in escaping in a wood scow.

At daylight Grant was ready for the final assault. But see! the white flag waves and an officer comes from the beleaguered ranks with offers of capitulation. Grant's terms seem hard:

"Nothing but unconditional and immediate surrender!" he cried, "or I will move upon your works."

Then Buckner sent back the bitter message: "Necessity compels me to accept your ungenerous and unchivalric terms," and Fort Donelson was won and fifteen thousand prisoners captured!

Ah, how quickly the news sped North and South. What glad hurrahs! what bitter tears, what joy, what sorrow, greeted that fallen fort!

Johnston heard the news at Nashville and retreated in hot haste. Buell heard it and seized the defenseless city, and Carey heard it at Columbus on the Mississippi and spiked his guns and flung them in the river, and fell back on Island Number Ten, thirty miles away, whose strong works he hoped would shield him.

And two gentle women at Meltonburg heard it and on their knees thanked God—not that Fort Donelson was fallen—but that their soldier-boy was safe.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

TILE-DRAINING LANDS.

Work That Pays for Itself in the Course of a Single Year.

Few farmers appreciate the value of thoroughly underdraining wet places on their farms, or we should see this advance in improvement oftener undertaken. What has up to the time of draining been little if anything more than an idle waste may by judicious tile draining become the most fertile and productive spot in the neighborhood. Thus, instead of being a constant threat to health and an unsightly waste, it is turned by a few tiles and some work into a source of profit to the owner, and will be pointed to with pride by everyone who knows of it as an object lesson in what may be done in a great many other places.

These remarks have been suggested by observations on a meadow which had been flooded by the filling up of an old mill pond near Morganton, but which is being reclaimed for Dr. P. L. Murphy, superintendent of the state hospital, by Mr. W. E. Walton, who has the farming for the hospital in his immediate charge. Up to the time the first drains were laid, which was less than a year ago, the whole area was either a barren waste or a thicket of coarse weeds and small trees, of which no use could be made. This season it has produced a heavy growth of corn in the whole area first drained, except on about one-half acre, where the wire worms (the larvæ of the snapping-beetles) have injured it, and about two acres, most of which was devoted to melons and pumpkins. Thirty tons of watermelons were taken from about one and one-half acres, and the yellow pumpkins, while still on the ground where they grew, were a beautiful sight in the early September sun.

It was but a short time ago when a high authority in agriculture expressed the opinion that the stream into which the drains must empty could not be lowered enough to make the drainage of this meadow successful. Straightening the curves by cutting across the loops has helped, so that now the stream has cut its own bottom down eighteen inches lower than it was when the work was undertaken.

This reclaimed meadow bids fair to become the most productive field on the farm, which is contributing in many ways to the support of the state hospital.—F. E. Emery, Agriculturist, N. C. Experiment Station.

THE "WHY" IN FEEDING.

Too Much Blind Imitation of the Practices of Our Forefathers.

The reason for following a certain course should be clear, especially in the feeding of valuable animals. The growth of various constituents of the body requires an adaptation of the various kinds of food to the different demands. The growing animal needs one kind of material; the mature working animal requires another, and the fattening beast demands a further variety. While it is true that some articles of food in certain combination are standard for any of the objects suggested above, it is a fact that much waste of food may result under a wrong combination. The auxiliary articles of diet which give tone to the system are frequently over-used. Again they are combined in a ratio that is all out of proportion. One phase of this overdoing, which many farmers indulge in, is the continuous feeding of hay or fodder.

This is oftener true of stock confined in sheds or barns during the day. Many farmers who follow this ancient custom, long ago learned that "piecing between meals" is not best for the human being, but they overlook the idea as applied to their fat stock. Second thought will convince everyone of the folly of this plan, which can but result in derangement of the digestion. Sluggishness in the work horse, and dyspepsia, etc., in the growing and fattening animal, necessarily follow. The greater cost of grain, as compared with hay, oftener leads to an insufficient supply of grain food. The whole question is a great one, and concerns seriously every extensive breeder and feeder. But when the average feeder is asked what authorities he has read on the theory of feeding, few can show that they have done much in this direction. The traditions and practices of ancestors have been all sufficient in too many cases. In this age of inventions there should be a revival of "why" we are doing this. With the agricultural colleges for assistance, the farmer of to-day should make fewer mistakes than his father did, but brains must be mixed with his work.—Cor. Orange Judd Farmer.

A BROODING COOP.

Advantages of a Front Constructed of Wire Netting.

This coop is constructed out of light half-inch pine. Take a hat or shoe box, trim it down with saw and hatchet to a proper size to accommodate the old hen and her brood. The top may be covered with water-proof paper, or light oil-cloth tacked over will answer well the purpose. The front shade or shelter can be made of canvas fastened

about a wire and screwed on each side of the coop. The front, as you will notice, is made simply of wire netting; through this the young chicks may pass in and out at pleasure. The door at side is used to put food in to the old hen, and remove her or any litter that may accumulate from time to time. It is nice to place a little straw inside to keep the hen and chicks warm on damp days. The handle on top can be made of a leather strap or any old suspender. This makes it easy to carry from one point to another. Moving a brooding coop from place to place is essential to the improvement of the brood, giving them, so to speak, fresh pasturage.—Ohio Farmer.

BRUSH FOR HORSES.

Half-Worn Brooms May Be Used for Making One.

An excellent brush for horses, nearly equaling in value the rice-root brush of commerce, may be made in a few moments on farms where broom-corn is raised; or, half-worn brooms may be unbound and used for the purpose. Saw out a piece of two-inch plank eight inches long and two and a half inches broad, and with a chisel take out the middle of the edge of this block, leaving three-eighths of an inch on either side. This should form a groove an inch and a quarter deep, as shown

FIG. 1.—FRAME FOR HORSE-BRUSH.

in Fig. 1. Having soaked the broom-corn in water until it is soft, place a layer on a bit of lath, cover it with a thin piece of wood like that used in making cigar boxes, and nail the two together firmly with short wire nails. Then turn it over, bend the corn around the lath and bind it as before, using longer nails and clinching them. Pains must be taken to have this part of the brush, as in Fig. 2, thin enough to fit into the groove and leave room for more corn. To complete the brush, place a layer of corn across the groove and crowd the part first made down level into it, arranging the corn carefully as it is pushed down. Having

FIG. 2.—THE BRUSH COMPLETE.

firmly bound the brush by passing through it three or four long wire nails to act as rivets, it must be trimmed level on the face and dried slowly before being used. No horseman having once handled a broom-corn or rice-root brush will do without one.—American Agriculturist.

Hay Seeds for Chicks.

When you have a brood of chicks try giving them the sweepings of the hayloft in which to scratch and you will be surprised to notice how busy the little fellows will be and how industriously they will work to secure the seeds. There is nothing that will tempt little chicks like small seeds, and they will scratch from morning until night if they can find them. The scratching will do more to keep them in health than anything that can be done for them. It makes them keep warm, compels them to feed without filling their crops too rapidly, prevents leg weakness, and assists them to endure cold. Their appetites will also be greater and they will eat anything else provided with avidity. If chicks are fed four times a day when young and given hay chaff and leaves to work in they should grow rapidly. They must be kept in a warm place, having plenty of light and carefully fastened up at night.—Farm and Fireside.

Hens Cannot Be Forced

No hen can be forced to lay eggs. Nature gives her a certain period of time during which the eggs are to be developed. It is not difficult to supply her with the needed elements for this purpose, and any surplus bestowed will only be waste, for if she cannot divert the material to production of eggs, she will either void them or lay them up in the storehouse of her body as fat, and will then become utterly unfitted to perform her functions as a producer of eggs.

Gen. Kirby Smith Burned Out.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 2.—The residence of Gen. T. Kirby Smith at —, wanee, Tenn., was burned yesterday. He had an insurance on the building but loses the contents and is practically penniless. His friends have already started a movement looking to the raising of a sum sufficient to reinstall the old veteran and his family of nine children.

Linen Making For America.

CHICAGO, Jan. 2.—An extensive company backed by eastern capitalists has been organized in Chicago for the manufacture of American flax. A license of incorporation has been issued to it under the name of the United States Linen Manufacturing Co. The capital stock is placed at $2,000,000.